

# Demassification Marketing Analysis: A Case Study of Another Half

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**Abstract.** As promotion channels becoming more and more fragmented and information technology developing more and more effective, demassification marketing in a niche market instead of traditional mass marketing becomes a necessary choice for marketing practitioners. The essay will analyze the challenges of demassification marketing, list influencing factors towards its practice, and propose specific public relations strategies that could be applied in demassified marketing process by doing case study on Another Half Gin's demassification marketing practice and applying the research method of literature review. The study shows that demassification marketing should focus on clear targeted markets, exclusive marketing position, precisely locating targeted audience, and demassified sales channels. The article also articulates the influencing factors towards demassification marketing key points, and divided those into external factors, internal factors, and dyadic factors which focus on the consumers side, the organization side, and the interaction between the two sides separately. The article also highlights the importance of internet platforms such as social media in modern public relations practice since it can provide closer and stronger bonds between the organization and its audience in a more individual level. The article proposes that it is necessary for organizations to apply demassification marketing in selling campaign, which requires the practitioners to treat the audiences as individuals rather than as a mass group. Another Half case also inspires alcohol industry to adapt to consumers' rising health consciousness in post-epidemic era.

**Keywords:** demassification marketing; public relations; case study

## 1. Introduction

With the popularity of the big data era and the upgrading of information techniques, public relations system and practices show a prospective function of establishing a more precise and individualized ties between an organization and its audience. This is called "demassification", which illustrates the beginning of a new era in communication and marketing following the mass communication era brought about by the significant increase in the reach accessibility of media channels in the past century. Connecting with targeted individuals directly rather than expanding the audience, operating two-way symmetrical mode by assessing the feedback mechanisms of audience rather than indoctrinating receivers through a one-way asymmetrical mode, are the core objectives of demassified communication. These functions can be achieved by modern public relations implementations, which will be elaborated and analyzed in detail later in this article.

The author is trying to do case study on Another Half, which is a Gin brand targeted precisely on those professional connoisseurs and experts of Gin, in order to investigate how public relations theories and strategies work in practical case of demassification marketing. Data showing that global Gin market size are continuously expanded in general from 2012 to 2022, rising from \$7,500 million to \$15,000 million (including a brief reduction in 2020 and 2021 due to the global epidemic), and it is obviously that this trend will continue in near future [1]. With a large sales volume of Gin in the U.S. (in 9-liter cases) of 9,989 k, market competition is extremely intense in relevant alcohol industry, requiring the new brand Another Half to figure out the core competencies of the brand and attract key consumers to maximize the profits, which is an exact example of demassification marketing [1]. In addition, according to research, the reason why Gin consumers in the U.S. switch usual brand dominant in interpersonal recommendations (24%), the psychology of differentiation (23%), and media advertising (20%) [1]. These phenomena inspire public relations practitioners to focus on

accurate channels, turning the authority of the organization into a more approachable and symmetrical connection between the organization and their audience. Among brands of Gin, Another Half is an exemplified case, because it is highly targeted on specialized drink lovers with clear consumer portraits. Researching on the brand can help us gain an authentic perception of demassification marketing.

Based on practical marketing activities and public relations campaign of Another Half's first appearance in public, this article will analyze the demassification marketing process of the brand. The article will articulate the demassification marketing process of Another Half from following perspectives:

1. General goals of the demassification marketing and Another Half's macro tactics;
2. Factors that affect the relationship building of demassification marketing;
3. Specific public relations strategies and plans Another Half applied.

Basically, the author will use the classic communication study theories of uses and gratification approach and innovation diffusion theory to analyze the process, as the whole process is exactly a new brand launching products and reaching out to the targeted audiences in the context of demassification marketing, according with the process of innovation and application. Method of literature review is applied in this article to explore the key points of demassification marketing and specific suggestions of which. Sources of materials mainly include producers and distributors and bibliographic sources.

By analyzing this, the author is trying to reinforce the demassification marketing awareness of public relations practitioners, list the essential issues of making a successful demassification marketing plan, and propose practical and detailed suggestions for enterprise in their demassification attempts.

It is a challenging task for all public relations practitioners to change the traditional view that the mass media is the most effective and overriding category of media and marketing. However, the possibility of precise demassification marketing may bring to public relations and marketing fields can create more values in the electronic era. The public relations professional is always certificating values, innovations, and creations by using advanced technology to ensure a more inclusive and informed society [2].

## 2. Literature Review

In a long period of time from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, communication study allocated a central place to mass communication, investigating the predominant status of it in shaping the constructure of power distribution, society, and interpersonal relationships. However, a new concept of "demassification" of public communication media on the basis of new online technology has fundamentally changed the relationship between media and society, generally for the better [3]. "Demassification" describes the decline of mass culture and mass society as consumers have gained more choice of media content since the development of precise big data technique and other media technology, which was firstly proposed by futurist and social thinker Alvin Toffler in his monograph *The Third Wave* [4].

The concept was considered to be a prediction of coming information era when it was first proposed, while the advent of demassification era has become an indisputable fact in current reality. As mass market are divided into smaller segments and audience acceptability is influenced by the proliferation of media vehicles and the renewal of communication technology, an increasing number of organizations are aware of the change happened in media and communication fields, and furthermore, in public relations and marketing fields [5]. Gorelick was the first to derive this conception into marketing literature, pointing out that every individual consumer should be considered as a separate market or potential market, instead of a portion of the traditional mass market[6]. Based on which Rotfield then proposed the concepts of specialist segmentation, emphasizing the process of targeting and refining audiences.

While demassification marketing bringing effectiveness and benefits to advertising agencies or organizations nowadays, it may also bring negative impact on the balance of media environment. Qian conducted critical research on this topic, elaborating the contradiction between reality and ideal function of demassification communication. Instead of providing higher autonomy and choices to audience through a refined and two-way symmetrical communication, demassification communication still operate compulsion and forcing as a commercial form, which damages the rights and interests of audience [7].

Consumer research is an important part of making demassification marketing plan. There are substantial empirical study on consumers purchase willingness, which can be approximately divided into following five aspects: 1. Individual features (e.g. gender, age, occupation, income, education level, etc.); 2. Internal factors (e.g. quality, reliability, performance, etc.); 3. External factors (e.g. price, brand, guarantee, etc.); 4. Consumption scenarios; 5. Social economic factors [8].

Another essential part of this consumer research is about consumer preference of Gin as the prerequisite for making demassified marketing strategy in the case study of Another Half. Quental de Almeida and Meneses' s quantitative study results verified the positive impact of need for group differentiation on the consumption of Gin [9]. It also illustrated the freshness audience perceived from social media and acquaintance have direct effect on Gin consumption, which provide demonstration for choosing certain public relations strategy or media strategy in the specific demassification marketing practice. Meanwhile, the study denied herd behavior influence in Gin consumption, which proved the necessity of demassification marketing for its differentiator for individual audience in the case marketing campaign on the other hand.

### **3. Analysis of Another Half case**

#### **3.1 The challenge of demassified marketing and Another Half's macro tactic towards it**

To analyze the demassification marketing process at the micro level as a case study, the author introduces the theory of precision marketing proposed by Lester Wunderman, which is the foundation of demassification marketing mentioned in this article. Precision marketing is defined as a discipline and theory of marketing which based on scientific management, with gaining insight into targeted consumer insight, appropriately segmenting the market, and adopting a meticulous marketing execution to obtain expected benefits [12]. There are challenges organizations or enterprises may confront when managing demassification marketing, the following content will specifically explain each of these challenges or goals.

##### **3.1.1 Clear targeting market**

The first challenge the enterprise or organization may confront is to choose a certain segmentation in the fragmented market, and clearly recognize the exact key characteristics that the consumers purchase for the certain products or services [13]. Only when the practitioners get the core demands of audience, can they start to conduct demassification marketing.

In Another Half's case, choosing an appropriate market segmentation is the prerequisite for following marketing execution. The brand identifies their target audience and market segmentation explicitly as alcohol lover both male and female, full age ranged, whose personal interests are highly connected to spirit consumption. On the basis of that, the marketers analyze the consumer's psychology and potential purchase behavior. They believe this sort of consumers appreciated the history, smoothing experiences, and spiritual enjoyment while drinking. Instead of being indulged into alcohol, the targeted consumers are more health-conscious, what they consider more important is the balance between relaxation of alcohol and self-wellness, as well as creativity contained in the products. All of this detailed research on targeted consumers are the foundation of demassification marketing followed, and is the first challenge in the whole process.

### 3.1.2 Exclusive marketing position

In non-monopoly situations, there are always intense marketing competition with tremendous and homogenizing competitors in a certain targeted marketing segmentation. It is a necessity for an organization or enterprise to position itself in an exclusive and unique way in order to distinguish itself among competitive products or services [13].

In Another Half's case, they manage to position the brand extremely specially and creatively, shaping the core competitiveness of the brand and the products. Another Half is committed to applying an exclusive wine making process to reduce the negative effects and damages caused by alcohol to human nervous sympathetic system through the secondary fermentation process technology. This brewing process is called "two-way systematization". With the advanced technology, the brand positions itself as "fine liquor in the future", emphasizing the healthy-friendly features and creation involving the brand unique selling proposition, which forms its exclusive marketing position and manages to differentiate with other competitors.

### 3.1.3 Precisely locating targeted consumers

The next challenge after determining the targeted market and exclusive product position is how to reach targeted audience precisely, widely, and effectively [13]. This requires the enterprise or organization to choose appropriate communication strategy and media tools to increase brand exposure and improve effective reach rate among targeted audience efficiently. As it is highly correlated with public relations strategy and theory, this part will be detailed described in the following part of this article.

### 3.1.4 Demassified sales channels

"Sales channel" here in this context is a general concept. It is not only about by which channels the marketer sales their products, but also contains a whole system to support for consumers purchase behavior, for example, price system, logistics system, and billing system [13]. A well-demassified sales channel is quite important to improve consumers' convenience and reduce consumers' cost, which will ultimately increase consumers' loyalty to the brand and achieve a win-win circle between the enterprise and their customers.

In Another Half's case, as the brand targets its audience at professional alcohol connoisseur community who are expected to be in middle to high income group, marketer prices the Gin on \$58 per bottle, highly above the average price of Gin market. Because of the development of consumerism, people with higher economic status may be more possible to buy luxury and extravagance, which prove the compatibility between the price strategy and their targeted audience. As for sales channels, marketer combines on-line channels and off-line channels. On contrary to most brands in internet era, Another Half pays more attention on traditional off-line channels according to its demassified audience by cooperating with upscale liquor connoisseurship events or sophisticated Gin club and encourage direct sales from supply chains instead of distribution system, in order to adjust to targeted audience's consumption habits and provide better service for this demassified audience.

## 3.2 Factors affecting demassification process

To successfully manage demassification marketing and attract targeted audience, the ideal mode is to build an effective communication relationship between the organization and its audience by achieving macro goals mentioned before. There are complex factors affecting the relationship quality and thus influencing the demassification marketing process. The author divides those factors into external factors, internal factors, and dyadic factors, in order to clarify the importance sorting when doing demassification marketing goal setting and executing process.

### 3.2.1 External Factors

There are more comprehensive influencing factors from externality for an organization to making marketing plan because of the complex market environment, intense market competition, and elusive purchase behavior of consumers.

From a customer-focused perspective, the main influencing antecedents for relationship building lies in two aspects: 1. Relationship benefits; 2. Dependence on organizations [14]. Research showed that the more values and benefits customers aware from a relationship, the more likely they will cooperate with the organization to establish a healthy connection [15]. And those positive values include convenience, companionship, and etc. Dependence on organizations illustrates the exclusivity of service or products the organization can provide. This issue also reflects the intense competition in the relative market by indicating how many alternative choose are available. Relative dependence can be contingent, bringing both positive and negative impacts to the relationship between customers and organizations for the customer's dependence may be decreased by the organization's dependence if excessive [15]. Those customer-focused factors can lead to a customer-focused outcomes, including their expectation of brand continuity, public evaluation to the brand, and loyalty to the brand.

### **3.2.2 Internal Factors**

For internal attributions, research focused on the interior organization, including the employees and the management structure. The internal factors are the most dynamic influencing elements of demassification marketing process, as well as the easiest aspect that the marketing practitioners can conduct improvement in.

From an organization-focused perspective, scholars also proposed two main aspects that affects the relationship building process: 1. Relationship investment; 2. Practitioner expertise [14]. The first antecedent emphasizes the managing strategy and policy in a general context, referring the time, effort, resources, labor distribution and etc. that the organization devote. Research proved that such investments could affect the relationship mediator positively by maintaining a reciprocal bonds between customers and organizations [16]. The second antecedent focuses on the employee's occupational skills, knowledge, experience, and overall competence for example. Equipped with higher professional skills can also result in positive impact on customers evaluation and thus strengthen the relationships. Following which organizations can maintain the relationships sustainably and actively by improving employees' objective performance through optimizing the resource investment and reinforcing staff training.

### **3.2.3 Dyadic Factors**

For dyadic factors between the internal organization issues and external customer and market issues, there are substantial and complex influencing factors that have impact on the relationship building process. The dyadic factors are the most essential parts of the interaction, since it can provide two-way symmetrical exchange involvement for both sides.

From a dyadic perspective, the influencing antecedents can be divided into mainly 5 parts according to former research: 1. Communication; 2. Similarity; 3. Relationship duration; 4. Interaction frequency; 5. Conflict [14]. Communication part emphasizes the quality of message and feedback exchange process between customers and staffs, and create stable bonds by diminishing controversy, confirming shared values, offering reciprocity, and etc. Similarity such as shared interests, culture, belief, and other commonality between individuals and organizations is the foundation of a pleasant communication and later a long-lasting relationship for internal and external side of an organization. Relationship duration means how long the relationship has been existed, while interaction frequency means when does the exchange between partners have a pause or continue executing. The combination of the two attributions can keep the customers' attention staying top of minds. And conflict refers to the overall disputes between two sides. Higher level of conflict can have negative impact on the relationship through reducing the customers' trust and commitment toward the organization [17].

## **3.3 Specific managements for demassification marketing**

In parts mentioned above, the author analyzed the overall goals of demassification marketing and Another Half's macro tactics, as well as listed the internal, external, and dyadic influencing factors of the relationship building process which is the core target in demassification marketing. In following

part, the article will introduce Another Half's specific managements and summarize the common public relations strategies that could be applied into demassification marketing practice.

Targeting at an extremely specialized group of audience, Another Half designed a series of thorough media plan to attract targeted audience's attention and try to establish a harmonious bond between the brand and their audience.

In media plan part, Another Half divided their media context into offline media and online media. For offline media, marketers choose magazines, TV and cable, and out of home as main forms of advertising. Publications are very specialized since the audience select these advertisements actively tying in with their interests. Local TV broadcasting can keep the message staying local and relevant. Out of homes, billboards for example, is effective way to get attention and mobile. For online media, marketers choose digital publications, PPC, and social media. Comparing to offline media, these online media work better in tracking the website traffic and helping marketers monitor the effect of advertising and feedback of customers. Also, social media is an extremely cost-effective medium especially in demassification marketing context. Social platforms can help the brand to better connect personally with targeted individuals on the basis of interpersonal community, and thus increasing the audience's trust and commitment toward the organization and strengthen the bonds between both sides, having positive impact on demassification marketing.

As a soaring atmosphere of online media, it is necessary for organizations to change traditional public relations strategies into social media tactics. Having more detailed fragments of market segmentation, social media helps the organization establishing more strong relationships between both sides and can better reinforce the bonds through more access towards audience. That is called "media catching" by Richard, Timothy, and Natalie [18]. Another Half provided an excellent example as social media shifting of public relations strategies preference and showed an effective outcome both in economic profits and brand awareness.

#### 4. Conclusion

The article analyzes the public relations strategies and marketing tactics in demassification marketing practice through a case study of Another Half Gin, summarizing the macro challenges of demassification marketing, listing influencing factors towards which, and proposing possible path by putting out Another Half's example. To sum up, it is necessary for organizations to change their inner regulations to adjust to niche markets and build up and maintain a close connection with their specialized targeted audience in demassification marketing era with more specific targeted objectives, more segmented channels, and exclusive brand positions. It is worth mentioning that as network developing rapidly and wide spreading, it is essential for organizations and marketing practitioners to use internet utensils such as social media to improve brand exposure and competence.

The case of Another Half also proposed a new perspective for alcohol brand marketing in post-epidemic era. Under influence of COVID-19, individuals will be inspired by a new health cognition and health consciousness. The global epidemic expedites and improves individuals' health perception, which will influence their lifestyle and behaviors for a long-term in post-epidemic era, especially in consumption behaviors. Close relevant to health issues, alcohol industry is confronting a huge challenge that as customers are attaching more importance to products' health friendly attribution, alcohol's negative impacts to human body may narrow the liquor market and decrease the profit of the brand. Another Half is the inauguration of the "dual activation and body fluid regenerating" liquor, by positioning that it was the first one to deliver a new creative idea that diminishes the health risks of drinking with scientific authentication. This can inspire the whole alcohol industry to pay more attention to the health issues of their products, turning into an omni-caring selling proposition that emphasized both physical and mental well-beings.

As promotion channels becoming more and more detailed and information technology developing more and more precise and effective, demassification marketing which targeted at a very specialized audience group becomes an inevitable trend of marketing. Public relations strategy applied in

marketing practice should also adapt to the trend and shift its focus point to internet utensils such as social media. Demassification marketing is absolutely the future of marketing fields and can bring more benefits and profits to both the organization and the customers.

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